Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan.—When did this department began to grow in importance?

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—This department has been growing in importance from its very inception.

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan.—Therefore, as the department will be growing in importance in future the pay of the Director will also have to be increased. Is it not so?

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—That does not follow.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—Was there not an abnormal outburst of the activities of this department recently at Trippunittura?

President.—I do not think it is a supplementary question?

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—When did it began to grow?

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—It began to grow from the very day it was instituted.

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—Why was not the increment given at the time of the permanent Diwan?

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—I have once answered that question. The orders were passed at the time of the preparation of the budget.

Mr. K. T. Mathew.—May I know whether the Government was aware of his qualifications at the time of his appointment?

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—I have answered that question once.

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar.—Did he accept his first pay under protest?

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—No officer of the Government can accept his pay under protest.

Mr. K. Mohamed Seethi.—Were there other qualified candidates for the post?

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—There was only one applicant. Of course, I speak subject to correction. I would rather say I want notice.

Improvement of Thevar road in Trichur Taluk.

119. **Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar.**—Will the Government be pleased to state what steps, if any, they have taken to improve the Thevar road in Trichur Taluk?

Mr. V. K. Aravindaksha Menon.—Owing to lack of funds it was not possible to provide for the work.

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar.—Does the Government recognise the urgent necessity of the improvement of that road?

Mr. V. K. Aravindaksha Menon.—This question was put before the Road Board and they said that the road was necessary.

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Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar.—Will the Government be pleased to consider that when the next year's Budget is prepared?

Mr. V. K. Aravindaksha Menon.—Yes.

Price of petrol in the State

120. Mr. P. Krishna Menon.—Will the Government be pleased to state—

(a) the approximate quantity of petrol purchased by the Government for their use in 1108;

(b) from which importing company was the purchase made;

(c) what was the range of prices per gallon in the year 1108;

(d) was petrol available in the State for prices lower than that at which Government purchased it during the year;

(e) are the Government aware that the importing companies are not allowed by the British Government to sell petrol above a certain rate per gallon in places to which petrol is imported by steamer;

(f) will not the restriction apply to Ernakulam;

(g) is there not a sort of price-war in Ernakulam in the sale of petrol going on even now?

Mr. V. K. Aravindaksha Menon.—(a) 9,436 gallons.

(b) The purchase was made from the Agents of the Burma Shell Co.

(c) The price in Ernakulam ranged from Rs. 1—1—3 to 1—9—6 per gallon bulk.

(d) No.

(e) No information is available.

(f) Do

(g) The Burma Shell now sell petrol at Rs. 1—1—3 and the Western India Co. at 1—4—6 per gallon bulk.

Mr. P. Krishna Menon.—At what price was this 9,436 gallons purchased?

Mr. V. K. Aravindaksha Menon.—A portion of the quantity was purchased at Re. 1—1—3 and the rest at Rs. 1—9—6.

Mr. P. Krishna Menon.—Was the purchase at Rs. 1-1-3 made at the fag end of the year 1108?

Mr. V. K. Aravindaksha Menon.—As soon as the price fell we started purchase.

Mr. P. Krishna Menon.—When was it please?

Mr. V. K. Aravindaksha Menon.—I think it was when the Russian Petrol came.

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